

Unfortunately it rained like wild all the time we were on the island but we did take a quickie tour of the island during the afternoon. We visited the area in which most of the statues are located, the side of the volcano [Rano Raraku]. They truly are magnificent. Some must run forty feet in height (or length since most of them are lying on their large noses). They weigh some 25 tons, we were told. Where they came from we shall leave to Thor Heyerdahl and Father Sebastian and the other historians. The race that carved them disappeared . . . and it is assumed they were overthrown by forces from off the island. Although most of the statues are near the lava quarry, many have been transported five miles from the quarry. This raises a question as to how they moved them. At the time of the long ears there were no animals on the island and it had to be done by sheer manpower. Some of the statues were moved from the quarry on the side of the volcano up two hundred or more feet and down inside the volcano. The people must have been dedicated to the point of fanaticism.

Though the telling is short, the trip was long and wet and we slid through mud that taxed our four-wheel drive vehicles. We arrived back in camp at supper time and dined with the governor and his wife and the Chilean commandante and his wife. These were the only white women on the island. The natives appear to be Polynesian. Very tall, many men over six feet, light-skinned and handsome. They speak a combination of Spanish, their native tongue, and bartering English. We tried to buy wooden carvings of the statues and I was able to get two small ones . . . Unfortunately, the third airplane that landed on the island had come there in March and it was a tourist-scientific flight. Those 'ricos' ruined all the prices. Prior to their arrival, the natives would trade a large carving for a carton of cigarettes or a pair of pants. Now they ask \$50. They have no need for money as the only store on the island is a commissary run by the Chilean government. They have very little for sale there, and the natives make most of their own goods. If we had known that we were going to the island we could have brought trade good, fishing lines, hooks and nets, and lots of pants. They seemed intrigued with trousers and equate \$50 to three pairs of chinos. I doubt, however, that I will ever get back.

We left at daybreak on the 21st in order to get back to Santiago before dark. Santiago lies in a nest among the foothills of the Andes and we did not want to risk running into a mountain in the dark.

When we arrived at the airplane for takeoff, the crew chief showed me the door of the airplane. During the night someone had painted a picture of the head of one of the statues on the door and labeled the airplane "Rapa Nui No. 1". There was much sadness and waving as we left. I wish we could have stayed another day or two but we had to get back to Bermuda. We took another group of passengers back with us. One was a mental case, an American who had flipped. He was under sedation and was no problem at all. Poor kid had taken up with a native girl, had gone to live with her in her cave—and we took him away from all that.

Our trip back was a blur. We would fly ten hours, land, go to bed, get up and fly again until time became confused. We arrived back in Bermuda Sunday evening, completely bushed but with a little more of the world under our belts.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

France

Paul Bahn has alerted us to another *moai* "sighting," this time in Paris.



Three small *moai* were erected earlier this year in the gardens of the Natural History Museum, Paris. These apparently are temporary, in association with an exhibition called "Islands" (Photo: Paul G. Bahn).

WHAT'S NEW IN POLYNESIA

Fiji

In response to a need by the Fiji Museum and government to increase awareness of the importance of cultural heritage issues in the Pacific, a new course has been developed by the Sociology Department of the University of the South Pacific. The course, concerning Pacific Island Archaeology, will develop expertise in order to protect archaeological resources. The course will be innovative as it would link USP with the Fiji museum, with a focus on the Peopling of the Pacific. The course is not aimed at producing archaeologists but is for the dissemination of information to increase understanding and awareness. As part of the course, a field trip to Beqa Island in Fiji was made, under the direction of Geoff Clark and Athol Anderson of the Australian National University. Beqa Island provides evidence for use as a fishing camp for over 3,000 years.

University of the South Pacific Bulletin, May 1997

HAWAII

Samuel H. Elbert, Professor Emeritus of Pacific Languages and Linguistics, University of Hawai'i, died on 13 May, three months before his 90th birthday. Sam will be remembered mainly for his *Hawaiian Dictionary* (with Mary Pukui, 1971) and his *Place Names of Hawaii* (with Pukui and others, 1966). He also worked on the Polynesian outliers of Rennell and Bellona.

*W. Wilfried Schuhmacher,
Roskilde Technical College, Denmark.*

WHAT'S NEW IN HANGAROA

More fallout from the ill-fated *Mata Rangi*.

The yacht *Stray Dog* that went to the rescue of the sinking *Mata Rangi*, as described in our last issue, has itself met a sorry fate. The day after the *Stray Dog* arrived to Easter Island, it was pressed into service by the Chilean Maritime Authority and it left immediately to rescue the men from the sinking *Mata Rangi*. It took 30 hours of sailing to reach the reed boat, which was barely afloat some 150 nautical miles (279 kilometers) northwest of Easter Island. It was spotted with the help of flares that were first seen at 8:30 p.m. After the rescue, it took another 30 hours to return to the island.

In command of the yacht was Bryan Scott Kronmeyer, the owner. The rescue maneuver was directed by the captain of the port of Easter Island, 1st Lt. Eduardo Rubilar and 2nd Sgt. Luis Vergara, who traveled in the US yacht.

The Navy office on the island reported that the rescued men were all huddled in the aft section of the raft and were in good physical condition. Upon arrival back at the island, they were received with great joy by some 600 islanders who were waiting to greet them at La Pérouse bay. The *Stray Dog* subsequently was anchored at La Pérouse, but broke loose during a fierce squall on May 29th. She was totally destroyed after smashing up against the rocks. A few pieces of soggy navigation and electronic equipment were retrieved but everything else, including clothes and credit cards, was lost. The two *norteamericanos*, Kronmeyer and Cinque Ryan Corrin, his companion, stated that the uninsured ship was valued at US\$110,000.

No mention was made of the fate of the two stowaways (see RNJ Vol. 11:2, pg. 96) who presumably are still under indictment on the island. (Leaving the island as a stowaway on the *Mata Rangi* is akin to trying to stowaway on the *Titanic*. Bad choice).

Following all this, Kitin Muñoz, who had initiated the *Mata Rangi* project, stated to newsmen (as reported in *El Mercurio de Santiago*) that he would begin boat building again soon, but perhaps in Arica or Peru and he declared that *titora* reeds are a "... super choice for they float so well and stayed on top of the waves." Muñoz reported that "... little by little the raft was breaking apart and losing *titora* where the boat separated ..." and "... a fierce storm with waves of 6 meters [caused] the raft to began to break up."

When asked if he considered the expedition a failure, he replied "These things are normal in an expedition. This isn't a vacation, right? These are the things that demonstrate the problems and the risks of an expedition of this type and we have to assume that these things happen and it is necessary to assume it might happen—as expeditionaries, men of the sea, and men in general." [Clearly, this is a guy thing.]

[In consideration of the needs of the island—for example, the school—the expenditure of nearly one million dollars, plus the loss of the ship *Stray Dog*, suggests that this entire project is beyond sense. And now we will undoubtedly be treated to yet another raft expedition, by "men of the sea."]

NEWS FROM THE EASTER ISLAND FOUNDATION

"Ingrained Images. Woodcarvings from Easter Island" is the title of the exhibit which opened in June at the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, University of New Mexico. The exhibit, sponsored by the Easter Island Foundation and curated by founding President of the Foundation, Dr. Joan Seaver Kurze, will be in place until October 12, and will be a feature of the South Seas Symposium in August. A museum reception will be held on Wednesday, August 6th, beginning at 5:30 p.m. and directly following the Wednesday sessions. Exhibits director, Ian Wagoner, designed the layout of the exhibition.



Guest curator, Joan Seaver Kurze and exhibits director of the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, Ian Wagoner at the opening reception of "Ingrained Images" (Photo: G. Lee)

Ingrained Images is a delight for Rapanuiphiles. Various kinds of wood carvings are displayed along with photographs that illustrate the island as well as life today in the village of Hangaroa. A special part of the exhibition contains earlier pieces and drawings from the collection of Mark Blackburn.



Joan Seaver Kurze stands before the entry display for *Ingrained Images* at the Maxwell Museum which features colorful examples of Polynesian crab claw sails, designed by artist Mark Oliver (Photo: G. Lee)